

Spring / Summer 2004

Miami-Dade Park and Recreation LEISURE ACCESS SERVICES

Serving People with Disabilities

ONGOING ACTIVITIES



INCLUSION TEAM WINS 2004 NACO AWARD

The National Association of Counties awarded Miami-Dade County Park & Recreation's Inclusion Team with an Achievement Award. This is a non-competitive program that recognizes counties for improving the management of and services provided by county government. Congratulations to the inclusion team for their hard work and achievement. Team members include; Tannis Lhomme, Pernell Sumner, Rhonda Ham, Dolly Hansen, Ernie Lynk, Eldridge Mitchell, Aquilla Andrews, Adrea Araoz, Ruben Romeu, Lucy Binhack, Nelson Canales, Gisel Prado, and Helen Barnfather.



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Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Contact Information

If you have comments or suggestions for this newsletter, please contact Dana Pezoldt at dpezoldt@miamidade.gov.



www.miamidade.gov/parks

For more information
call 305-755-7848 v/tdd.

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity in employment and services and does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

Call 305-755-7848 (v/tdd) for material in accessible format, information on access for People with Disabilities, or for sign language interpreter services (7 days in advance).

Miami-Dade County
Park and Recreation Department
275 NW 2nd Street • Suite 414
Miami, FL 33128

Serving People with Disabilities

Miami-Dade Park and Recreation
LEISURE ACCESS SERVICES



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Leisure Access Center Showcase



Michael Pusey leads audience in the Pledge of Allegiance."

In May, the grounds of A.D. Barnes Leisure Access Center were decorated and ready for a Luau. The stage was decorated in a Hawaiian theme, complete with a smoking volcano backdrop, palm fronds, vines, tiki totems and surf boards. Artists Carlos Aalves and J.C. Carol worked feverishly to create a Polynesian environment by making everything from stage decorations and props to assisting participants with painting their t-shirt costumes.

The showcase began with participants leading the Pledge of Allegiance and "God Bless America." The Super Sluggers of Leisure Access South assisted with passing out Hawaiian leis to the audience. Ana Miranda, dance therapist, choreographed and taught the Starlights, Coconos and Fun on Friday Groups various hula dances, scarf dances, rhythmic Polynesian movements, and "Beach Boys frolic." The show concluded with Arts & Culture music teacher, Maria del Carmen, leading all the participants in song accompanied by her accordion.



Rudy Payret extends "Aloha" greetings to the audience.

FIU H.E.A.R.T.S. Students Partner with Miami-Dade Parks



Visual Impaired students play Pillow Polo with a Beep Ball

To even the playing field, all visually impaired athletes must wear blindfolds...It doesn't stop this student from getting a hit."

For the last four months Helen Barnfather, CTRS, has developed, planned and implemented a "hands on" training program with Florida International University students in the H.E.A.R.T.S. (Holistic Education for the Advancement of Recreational Therapy in the Schools) program. This was made possible through the hard work and generosity of Associate Professor, Dr. Alexis McKinney, CTRS and a grant from FIU. The grant was established to give students the opportunity to learn about a variety of disabilities, the use of adaptive equipment, as well as how to plan, organize and coordinate Sports Access Days. All together, the students planned four of them- three days for students with various cognitive and physical disabilities and one specially designed for students with low vision

and blindness. Many techniques and instruments were used in instructing the students such as; beeping softballs, brightly colored golf balls, beeping locator devises and the buddy system. Each event averaged 125 D.C.P.S. students and their teachers.

The FIU students had series of training days culminating to their final Sports Access Day at Crandon Park where they planned the whole event from start to finish. Each of the days were a huge success and the students from Miami-Dade Public Schools and their teachers had a great time while being exposed to some activities for the first time. Thank you Dr. McKinney, FIU students, and Helen for all of your hard work. (Helen will be presenting a poster session on this subject to the NRPA in Reno, NV in October).



FIU Recreation Therapy student, Mike, guides visually impaired student

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LEISURE ACCESS SERVICES*Serving People with Disabilities*

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First Annual Festival of Arts & Games

*Miami Heat's Burnie takes on the Miami Heat Wheels in an exhibition*

The first annual Festival of Arts and Games for children with special needs took place in mid-April at Kendall Indian Hammocks Park. Teaming up together for the common goal of using recreation activities to enhance the lives of children with disabilities, Leisure Access South and Creative Children's Therapy planned this special event attended by over 200 children and their families.

Children were able to participate in a variety of recreational and expressive activities such as wheelchair races, walker races, petting zoo, wheelchair basketball exhibition, arts and crafts, painting, drama, puppet shows and dance. "Burnie" mascot from the Miami Heat played basketball and took pictures with the children and staff. This festival allowed children with disabilities opportunities to work on their motor and social skills while recreating and having fun.

Many thanks to Manny Carvajal and the Kendall Indian Hammocks staff for their help and assistance in making this event a successful one.

*Wheel chair races were a big hit!**Festival participants enjoy crafts with Home Depot*

Leisure Access Manager Recognized

On June 25th Lucy Binhack, Leisure Access Services, received an Award of Excellence from Project ABC's "Interdisciplinary Fundamentals in Assistive Adaptive Technology" online course. Lucy received this award from her students as an Excellent Instructor. On June 30th, during the annual Florida Dance Festival, Lucy was honored with the Homer Avila danceAble Award, for contributing work of excellence to the "Mixed-Ability" Dance Movement.

*Lucy Binhack*

Thank You Coach Lloyd Chism

A group of young girls and boys with autism learned the basics of golf this spring from Coach Lloyd Chism (name correction from last edition of this newsletter). We are so grateful for his expertise and commitment to children with disabilities. We hope to begin lessons again in the fall. For more information, please call Dana Pezoldt at (305)755-7848.

*Coach Lloyd Chism instructs Thomas, age 11, on his grip and backswing.*

Senior Health and Fitness Days

Leisure Access North conducted its first Senior Health and Fitness Day, at Bannerman Pool. Two Community Action Agency senior centers participated in the activity. The group was introduced to aquatic exercise and is looking forward to being able to participate in the program throughout the summer. Those who participated were excited about the chance to jump in the pool and cool off while they were exercising. Leisure Access South also celebrated, in May, National Senior Health & Fitness Day. Our southern Miami-Dade C.A.A. partners along with four other Community Action Agency senior centers, attended the event at Deedco Gardens. National Senior Health and Fitness Day is the nation's largest annual health promotion for older adults.

*Seniors learn how to get fit while having fun*

Thank You Lighthouse For The Blind

The Miami Lighthouse for the Blind conducted training for Leisure Access staff and FIU Students on March 19th. The training involved learning about the different types of blindness and visual impairment, appropriate courtesies to show a person with visual impairments and how to guide a person with a visual impairment. The three hour training was facilitated by Elly DePre and Carol Brady-Simmons. In addition to sensitivity training and "hands-on" exercises, the participants were given a tour of the facility and shown some of the assistive devices now available to people with visual impairments. Thank you Lighthouse for refreshing our skills, serving as a resource and providing wonderful services to Miami-Dade County's population of persons who have low vision and/or blindness.

Huge Thanks To Custom Mobility



Thank you to owner (Bruce Bayes) and employees and volunteers (Charley Ruckstuhl, Wency Ainzua, Mike Parker, Hank House, John Beda, Craig and Brandon Tewksbury) of Custom Mobility. Their assistance with wheelchair repairs and tire changes made it possible for professional wheelchair athletes to play effectively at this year's NASDAQ Tennis Tournament. These volunteers and employees not only volunteered their time but also traveled long distances to support wheelchair sports.

*Custom Mobility employee, Craig Tewksbury, changes a pro wheelchair tennis athlete's tire at NASDAQ in late March.*

The Children's Trust



In 2002 The Children's Trust was created by voter referendum. This referendum provided a dedicated source of funding to increase support systems and resources for children in Miami-Dade County. The goal of the Trust is to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade. Leisure Access Services took advantage of The Children's Trust grant dollars to initiate two summer camps this summer. Camp Matecumbe is home to the Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp and Camp for children with developmental disabilities. The sites open-air gymnasium is a great place to play tennis, basketball, and other games without having to be exposed to Miami's hot summer sun. The site has become a favorite of campers and staff alike. Camp runs through August 6th. Call 305-752-4966 for more information.

Since partnerships are a priority for The Children's Trust, Leisure Access teamed up with Tropical Elementary School to create an inclusive 4-week summer camp for children with and without disabilities. Located next to Tropical Estates Park, the school was a perfect place to hold camp. Campers will take advantage of the park pool for swimming lessons. This camp is held from July 7 through August 8, 2004. For more information and registration call 305-755-7848.

We have just received funding for after school programs at Camp Matecumbe, Tamiami Park, Greynolds Camp and Westwind Lakes Parks for fall 2004. We hope that The Children's Trust and Miami-Dade Parks continue to partner to make Park programs for children with disabilities more accessible throughout Miami-Dade County.

*Camp Matecumbe's Parent Breakfast*